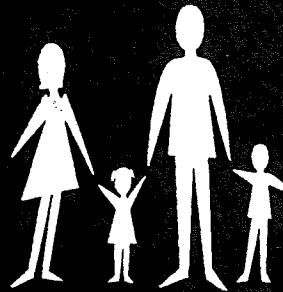




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PROCEEDINGS
OF THE NATIONAL
MINI-COLLOQUIUM
ON EXOGAMY



and
reception
structures for
francophone
immigrants

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INTRODUCTION

We take great pride in presenting the proceedings of the mini-colloquium on exogamy and reception structures for immigrants, which was held at Rockland, Ontario in February 1994 – by a fortunate coincidence, during the International Year of the Family. This event, organized jointly by the Office of the Commissioner of Official Languages and the Fédération des communautés francophones and acadienne du Canada, brought together a large number of persons who deal with the issue of exogamy on a daily basis.

The principal aim of the colloquium was to stimulate thinking about the phenomenon of mixed marriages and to consider new ways of receiving immigrants into the Francophone and Acadian communities.

The focuses of this dual-purpose colloquium were to identify the issues in exogamy for the Francophone and Acadian communities; to provide current statistics on exogamy; the consequences of mixed marriage for the family; and the mixed environment and its impact on the child (assimilation or preservation of differences). There was also a luncheon discussion on identification of the principal challenges to integration of immigrants into the Francophone environment.

To assist us in reaching a better understanding of the issues in exogamy, we asked speakers to deal with its various aspects. First, Professor Roger Bernard set out the chief issues in exogamy, drawing attention to three points: the context and rise of exogamy, exogamous families and assimilation, and the role of the family and the future of the Francophone community in Canada in an era of exogamy.

Statistician Réjean Lachapelle sketched a statistical portrait of trends in exogamy. Researcher Monica Heller explored the social dynamics of mixed families in a minority setting. More specifically, she examined the factors that influence families in their linguistic choices and looked at their experiences. Frank McMahon, in his presentation, described exogamy as seen in Alberta, and Marguerite Leblanc-Lamarre outlined the project "Nos réalités linguistiques / Our cultural reality", which was developed in Saskatchewan by the Service francaskois d'éducation aux adultes.

Zarha Jabli was kind enough to share with us her own experience as an immigrant to Canada. We learned from her that it is not easy for an immigrant to find her or his place amid the complexities of our ways and customs, which, very often, differ from those of the immigrant's country of origin.

This report contains some recommendations which, as the reader will see, reflect the legitimate interests and aspirations of individuals, families, the educational community and the community in general.

It is our hope that this document will lead to useful discussions on each of the themes of the colloquium. We wish to thank the speakers, the facilitators, the workshop secretaries and the participants. All of them contributed to the success of the event. Finally, the Fédération des communautés francophones et acadienne du Canada wishes to thank the Office of the Commissioner of Official Languages, its principal partner.

Issues in Exogamy

Introduction

While the rates of exogamous and endogamous marriages vary considerably in Canada from one ethnic (or cultural) group to another, endogamy still represents the norm for the great majority of Canadians today. The size of the ethnic (or cultural) group or its demographic weight are important factors in accounting for these variations: normally, the larger the group and the greater its demographic weight, the higher the rate of endogamy will be. The rates of exogamy for French-speaking partners in Canada, male and female, provide a good illustration of this hypothesis: the rate of exogamy is very low in Quebec, low in New Brunswick, high in Ontario and very high in British Columbia.

Since the end of the 1960s, exogamy has become a social phenomenon that characterizes the evolution of the Francophone and Acadian communities living in a minority situation in Canada. In order to understand the significance of exogamy, it is necessary first of all to situate it in the context of all the demographic factors that promote its increase (some will say that a kind of determinism is at work), examine the changes in values that legitimize it and analyze the conditions that encourage its spread as a form of family organization.

A number of analysts regard exogamy as a disturbing phenomenon for the future of the Francophone and Acadian communities. Before reaching this pessimistic conclusion, however, we should do three things: first, we should examine the linguistic behaviour (spouse/spouse, parents/children, child/child), the sense of belonging and the processes of socialization that develop within exogamous families to determine whether mixed marriages lead to linguistic transfers and cultural assimilation; second, we should try to understand the importance of the family's role in maintaining the linguistic and cultural vitality of the Francophone and Acadian communities in Canada, and then determine whether other social institutions can replace the family in its role of producing and reproducing communities; third, we can attempt to answer the crucial question that is the primary objective of this colloquium: is the exogamy phenomenon a cause for concern for the Francophone and Acadian communities living in a minority situation in Canada?

We have therefore selected three themes for consideration and discussion:

- Theme 1.** The background of the rise of exogamy
- Theme 2.** Exogamous families and assimilation
- Theme 3.** The role of the family and the future of the Francophone and Acadian communities in the era of exogamy.

Theme 1

Background of the rise of exogamy

During the era of traditional, agricultural and rural French-Canadian society, before the Quiet Revolution, the Church, the family and the school were the principal institutions that ensured the linguistic vitality of French Canada and assumed responsibility for transmission of the culture. It should be borne in mind that at this time French Canadians throughout Canada (including Quebec) formed a relatively homogeneous society, that provincial distinctions were secondary and that the Catholic religion was the foundation of French-Canadian culture. If religion represented the central cultural value and the fundamental element in identity, we must at the same time recognize that the Catholic faith was the guardian of the French language and that, in return, the language fostered preservation of the faith. Language and faith were two closely linked elements of the cultural universe: efforts to defend the French language very often encompass another effort--that of remaining faithful to the Catholic religion.

Against this cultural and religious background, exogamy was practically unthinkable. To choose a spouse from the other group, English Canadians, was to take the risk of losing one's culture and one's faith. In that world of symbolic representations, the distinctions were clear and well-defined: French was automatically associated with Catholicism and English with Protestantism. Very often, the other would be identified as a "Protestant" although the identification was essentially linguistic. In such a setting, exogamy was like the transgression of a taboo. Parental permission to marry outside the group was difficult to obtain and the obstacles set up by the Church difficult to overcome. In addition, the would-be partners risked being marginalized and ostracized. The cultural and religious barriers constituted impediments that seriously restricted the number of mixed marriages. At that time, endogamy was a powerful social norm transmitted by family, school and Church through joint activities and precepts. The impediments to exogamy were social, cultural and institutional, but the explanation goes beyond this.

The factors that explain the strength of endogamy as a social norm also include demographic and environmental phenomena. Very often French Canadians constituted the majority in the villages and parishes where they lived, although they were a small minority compared to the total population of the individual Canadian provinces, except in Quebec and New Brunswick. In the cities, they clustered around a parish and thus came to form neighbourhoods where they were a larger or smaller minority. The primary school of the concession, village or neighbourhood usually comprised a relatively homogeneous population consisting essentially of young, French-Canadian Catholics. At the secondary level, the situation was more complicated, but attendance was limited and a large percentage of those who attended secondary school were in French Catholic colleges or convents (academies), the rest attending English public high schools where the opportunities for "exogamous" contact were greater. As can be seen, these socio-demographic and environmental phenomena reinforced cultural and institutional factors to promote the maintenance of endogamy as a social norm and practice.

The final factor that we have selected is linked to the limited contact between French Canadians and the members of other cultural and religious groups. Not too long ago, the various linguistic communities were literally imprisoned in their respective unilingualism; contacts between groups were very limited because the great majority of English-speaking Canadians did not know French and, similarly, a significant proportion of French Canadians did not know English.

The cultural, religious, demographic, environmental and socio-linguistic changes in recent decades have resulted in quite a different situation. The transition from a traditional, rural, agricultural society to a modern, urban, industrial society has almost completely changed the way of life of the Francophone and Acadian communities, especially those living in a minority situation in Canada. The majority communities in Quebec and New Brunswick will not experience such dramatic changes in their way of life. In general, it can be said that the more a community is in a minority situation, the more drastic and profound the changes will be.

The transition from the rural, agricultural world to an urban, industrial one forced many French Canadians to leave the villages, parishes and neighbourhoods where they constituted a majority to go and settle in cities, parishes and neighbourhoods where they became a minority. The same was true of the schools and other institutions they frequented. For a large majority of Francophones, the process of modernization was nearly always accompanied by a transition to minority status, and the further the process of modernization went, the more pronounced was the change to minority status. Figures from the censuses of the last thirty years clearly show the progression to minority status from one census to another. Contact with Anglophones is now continuous; the English language dominates the world of work, business, communications and services. In this new environment, the sphere reserved

for French is too often limited to family life, while English dominates in all the activities of daily life. Against this background, minority Francophones absolutely must be bilingual if they wish to find a place for themselves; the practical situation requires it.

From this review of the major changes that have occurred, it can easily be seen that the new social and cultural environment will favour exogamy: Francophones are increasingly minorities, increasingly dispersed and increasingly bilingual--three factors that will result in an increase in rates of exogamy.

The abandonment of the traditional, modern and religious way of thinking means that the Catholic religion, the central element in the traditional culture, slowly became dissociated from the struggles for the survival of the French language and culture. The adage, "the language guardian of the faith, and the faith guardian of the language" lost its meaning and relevance.

"Frenchness" and bilingualism became values that replaced religion as the dominant value. Traditional societal solidarity gave way to a more regional and linguistic identity. The Francophone and Acadian communities took the place of French-Canadian society. The struggles for the survival of the French language and culture were seen through the lens of bilingualism, which effectively became the central element of the collective culture and of individual identity. The ideal was to know English, to write it and speak it like Anglophones, without succumbing to linguistic transfer and cultural assimilation.

Cultural, religious and linguistic barriers have fallen. Demographic, environmental and social factors favour greater cohabitation and the sharing of social institutions. Exogamy is a reality with which the Francophone and Acadian communities must now come to terms.

Are these values, situations and conditions likely to change significantly in the coming years? The answer is simple and direct: No! On the contrary, the demographic trends will most probably strengthen in the coming decades and create an environment that will contribute to an increase in the rate of exogamy among Francophones. In fact, the more Francophones are in a minority situation and are scattered, the higher the rate of exogamy will be.

In a few decades, the Francophone and Acadian communities have gone from a very restrictive and hermetic religious culture to a splintered and open media culture. Exogamy is no longer a taboo; on the contrary, it leads to a more committed cohabitation and makes it possible to experience a situation of complete bilingualism and to realize the great dream of many Francophones, who define themselves by their bilingualism and their belonging to two cultures.

Since demographic phenomena are relatively stable and upward and downward trends are very difficult to reverse, we may, by analysing the demographic data from recent decades, sketch the following picture for the years ahead:

- the dispersal and change to minority status of Francophones in Canada may become more pronounced;
- linguistic transfers from French to English will increase; in fact, the more the environment is a minority one, the higher the rate of linguistic transfer will be;
- there is no indication that the fertility rates of the mother tongue Francophone population will increase; they will remain low and below the Canadian average;
- the number of young Francophones will continue to decrease; the slippage will be more pronounced in environments where they are a small minority;
- the Francophone population outside Quebec is aging: the age pyramids are becoming inverted; the more Francophones are in a minority, the more acute the aging trend becomes and the more the percentage of young Francophones declines.

In this context, we will inevitably see an increase in exogamy, and it would be quite unexpected to see an abatement of this phenomenon in the near future. Exogamy is without a doubt a social reality with which the Francophone and Acadian communities must now come to terms. In addition, in extreme minority environments, it would not be surprising to find that the majority of new marriages involving mother tongue Francophone partners are mixed marriages. Francophone communities, take notice: exogamy is here to stay.

To fully grasp the scope and the social and linguistic consequences of exogamy, we must, first of all, analyze the linguistic behaviour within mixed families. Then we can attempt to answer the crucial question: is the exogamy phenomenon a cause for concern for the Francophone and Acadian communities?

Theme 2

Exogamous families and assimilation

While, currently, more than a third of mother tongue French partners living outside Quebec are in mixed families, it should be noted that rates of exogamy vary considerably from one province to another, depending on the demographic weight of Francophones. In environments where they are a very small minority (less than 5%), more than half of young Francophones live in exogamous families, while in majority environments (60% and over), approximately one young Francophone in 10 lives in the same situation. The proportion of exogamous families where the father is Francophone and the mother Anglophone is essentially the same as that where the mother is Francophone and the father Anglophone, regardless of the province of residence.

Francophone partners and assimilation

In mixed marriages among Francophones outside Quebec, the overwhelming majority of mother tongue French partners switch to English as the language spoken at home; approximately 9 out of 10 husbands adopt English, compared to 8 out of 10 wives. In environments where the minority is very small, the proportion approaches 100%, and in some cases reaches that figure. In majority environments, the rate of Anglicization is lower but still very high, affecting nearly three quarters of the French-speaking partners. We can say without hesitation that exogamous marriages lead to the Anglicization of the linguistic behaviour of the Francophone partners, in terms of the language spoken at home.

Linguistic behaviour of children

Most of the children born of mixed marriages identify both French and English as their mother tongues. The rest are almost equally divided between French as mother tongue and English as mother tongue. When we look at the child's principal language, that is, the language in which the child feels most comfortable, we find that more than half of the children of exogamous families list both English and French as principal languages, a third list English, and a minority (one child in 10) say they are more comfortable in French than in English.

When young people are asked what official language is most often spoken at home, the Anglicization of exogamous homes is unmistakable: approximately three out of four children say that English is most often used at home. In a situation of bilingualism, such as we find in a mixed family, the parents' degree of unilingualism will play a decisive role in linguistic behaviour within the family. It should also be noted that it is highly likely that the children's level of bilingualism will be very high in a minority situation and that this bilingualism in turn influences the linguistic behaviour of the exogamous family. Generally speaking, in exchanges between parents and children, the use of English predominates, and the more the environment is a minority one, the more marked is this predominance. As the child grows older, the less he addresses the Anglophone parent in French and the more he adopts a typically bilingual behaviour in his exchanges with the Francophone parent. As they grow older, children become increasingly bilingual and English tends to predominate as the language of communication between parents and children.

Linguistic behaviour among brothers and sisters

In exogamous situations, exchanges among brothers and sisters in all minority and parity (half of the population) environments more often take place in English than in French, and the more the environment is a minority one, the clearer is the predominance of English. Only in majority environments do exchanges among brothers and sisters take place more often in French than in English, but even in these environments, more than a third of the children adopt typically bilingual behaviour among themselves.

Linguistic behaviour among brothers and sisters is particularly revelatory of language experiences within exogamous families. First of all, they are not governed by the same constraints as when the child speaks to his parents: the unilingualism of a parent will not necessarily determine the choice of language in exchanges among children. In addition, parents cannot easily impose the language of communication among children when the parents are not present. We can thus regard such linguistic behaviour as being freer, more spontaneous and more indicative of Anglicization within exogamous families.

Theme 3

The role of the family and the future of the Francophone and Acadian communities in the era of exogamy

The vast majority of the studies on the relationships among language, culture and the community clearly indicate that language is a fundamental cultural factor and an essential form of culture. First, language is the vector of the culture and plays a vital role in preserving and developing a truly vibrant culture. Second, the use of a common language constitutes a factor for social cohesion that marks individual and group identity by becoming a symbol of the sense of belonging to a community. Consequently, the knowledge and the preservation of French as a mother tongue are the cornerstone of the survival of the Francophone and Acadian communities. Linguistic transfers entail a gradual loss of French culture, less active participation in community life and a weakening of the sense of belonging which, in turn, leads to a deterioration in community solidarity, and this process undermines the vitality of the community and threatens its survival.

The family performs a number of important functions in our society: the renewal of generations, cultural reproduction through the socialization of children, the maintenance and transmission of social status and the social and psychological security of its members, to name only the principal ones. Sociolinguists have shown beyond the shadow of a doubt that success in learning the mother tongue depends on the support of the family and school in a relationship of interdependence and continuity. They almost always add that the linguistic vitality of the community is decisive for the success of the family and the school. Taking up the hypothesis of institutional completeness (Raymond Breton), it seems that the strength of a community depends in large part on the level of development and vitality of its institutions.

There is no doubt that parents play a vital role in the success of instruction in the mother tongue and that the family is the best instrument of socialization for transmission of the cultural heritage and the development of language skills. When the family is assisted by a French-language school and by a strong community, the chances of success are great. But, in a minority situation, under adverse conditions, the chances of failure increase. It should be clearly understood that the family cannot assume sole responsibility for maintaining the linguistic and cultural vitality of the Francophone community. The same is true for the school. In fact, institutions must lend a hand to one another in a relationship of interdependence and continuity. Any break in the family, school and community chain can jeopardize the vitality of the whole.

The data on linguistic behaviour in mixed families amply demonstrates that exogamy nearly always results in a transfer from French to English, for both Francophone children and Francophone parents. In addition, the more the situation is a minority one, the higher the rate of exogamy and the more English predominates in the family at the expense of French. There seems no doubt that, under difficult cultural, social and demographic conditions, mixed marriages lead to greater assimilation, which results in still more pronounced minority status, which, in turn, will foster exogamy. Linguistic transfers to English are quite a lot higher among the partners and children in mixed families than among members of endogamous families; however, it must be borne in mind that the latter are not immune to assimilation and that they feel the impact of the same ineluctable forces: the more the environment is a minority one, the greater the degree of assimilation, even if both parents are Francophones.

We can conclude that exogamy is one of the causes of assimilation, but we cannot determine precisely the weight of exogamy among all the factors that account for the process of assimilation. Exogamy is probably not a worrisome phenomenon for the future of the Francophone and Acadian communities living in a majority situation, but concern increases when we analyze the vitality of the communities in a minority situation, the one in which increasing numbers of Francophones find themselves. One thing is certain, exogamy is here to stay!

Now that the major findings have been presented, the issue may be summed up as follows:

- The linguistic and cultural vitality of the Francophone and Acadian communities depends, in large part, on the preservation of French as the primary and cultural language from one generation to the next.
- The family plays a central role in preserving French as the primary and cultural language, but there must be co-operation between the family, the school and the community to ensure success in the learning of French as the primary language and the transmission of French culture.

The issue of interest to us may be stated as follows: How can the mixed family succeed in preserving from one generation to the next the learning of French as the primary language and ensuring the transmission of the French culture so as to contribute to the vitality of the Francophone and Acadian communities?

Exogamy in Francophone populations in a minority situation: Factors, change and consequences

Réjean Lachapelle expressed his personal views concerning exogamy to the audience, particularly the factors that promote exogamy, changes in it and the consequences for minority Francophone population.

Using numerous tables, Mr. Lachapelle explained to the participants the issues at stake in exogamy and its origins.

The following are the principal findings presented to the participants for their consideration during this day rich in food for thought.

1. The frequency of exogamy among Francophones is inversely related to their representation in the environment.
 - More than half the Francophones living in Newfoundland and the provinces west of Manitoba have a spouse whose mother tongue is not French. In all these provinces Francophones represent less than 3% of the population.
 - The rate of exogamy is between 40-50% among Francophones in Prince Edward Island, Nova Scotia, Ontario and Manitoba. Persons whose mother tongue is French constitute 4-5% of the population of these provinces.
 - In New Brunswick, where Francophones constitute a third of the population, the rate of exogamy of persons whose mother tongue is French is slightly under 15%.

2. The rate of Anglicization depends on the frequency of exogamy in the environment.
 - When the frequency of exogamy among Francophones is greater than 60% the rate of Anglicization always exceeds 50%.
 - The rate of Anglicization is below 10% when the frequency of exogamy is less than 20%.

3. Exogamy is increasing among young Francophones, but Anglicization shows a downward trend.
 - The reduction in exogamy, which is very pronounced in New Brunswick, is quite small in Ontario, except in certain situations.
 - Among French-English couples living outside Quebec young Francophone women use French at home to a greater extent than do their elders.

4. The transmission of French as a mother tongue from mothers to children depends on the language(s) of the father.
 - The transmission of French as a mother tongue to children takes place to a much greater extent when the father is Francophone (9 cases out of 10) than when he is Anglophone (2 cases out of 10).
 - If the Anglophone spouse can speak French the transmission of French as a mother tongue to children by the mother takes place in half of the cases.

Note: At the author's request, we reiterate that the opinions expressed and the analysis and interpretation of the data are the responsibility of the author and not that of Statistics Canada.

Linguistically mixed marriages and the future of French in the minority environment

Introduction

Every linguistic community needs institutions to reproduce itself. Such institutions are economic, political or social in nature and may belong to the sphere of work, education, religion or family life. The Francophone minority communities in Canada have traditionally relied on the church, the school and the family to ensure their reproduction.

For several decades, however, a social rupture has existed which radically changes the opportunities these institutions have to continue to perform such a role. One form this rupture takes is quite high rates of exogamy and assimilation.

A few years ago, in 1989, my colleague Laurette Lévy and I examined this issue. We found that we had detailed statistics on exogamy, as well as on its impact on the rate of linguistic transfer, but that we knew nearly nothing about the social dynamics of these mixed families. We had no idea of how things happened for the members of these families, of the reasons for their linguistic choices, of their experience. And we realized that, to understand the phenomenon properly and be able to intervene effectively, we would have to examine this reality close up.

We therefore undertook a survey of a sample of linguistically mixed families living in a minority environment.¹ For various reasons, however, we had to limit the size of our sample. We therefore decided to begin with a survey of Franco-Ontarian women married to Anglophones and living in one of the following three communities: Ottawa, Sudbury or Toronto. In the end, 28 women participated in semi-guided interviews with one of us. These interviews were often long and, above all, highly emotional,

The data from our survey, which we analyse elsewhere (see the bibliography of this document), are rich and complex. I will restrict myself, to dealing here, in a summary way, with two aspects of this survey: first, the social and economic conditions underlying the value of French for the wife and the other members of the family, and, second, their choices regarding the use of French and their participation in French-language institutions – particularly the school.

Mixed marriages: A variety of models

I must begin by stating that, even within the limited sample on which we relied, mixed marriages take diverse forms. We can, however, view these forms as part of a continuum, which ranges from the most Anglicized family to the family where French has a relatively significant value and role.

For all these families, bilingualism is important, especially as regards children. The differences lie in the strategies adopted to achieve bilingualism, the tangible opportunities to adopt one strategy or another and the degree of success achieved.

In general, the women who agree most readily to speak English and send their children to English-language schools are those who have the fewest resources and the least power. These are women who grew up in communities – particularly Sudbury – where English was spoken everywhere. In most cases, they learned English in the street at a very young age. As Annette² says: "When we played there were English-speaking children, when we were young, so...you learned....When you grow up with both languages, you don't think about it. It's just there. You know, you speak, then you switch from one language to the other.... We knew English before going to school, then we learned it." In other words, even if they came from homogeneous Francophone families, their community reality was already bilingual.

Then, when they grew up in Ottawa or Sudbury, these women had no opportunity to pursue their education in French. In most cases this was because French-language secondary schools did not yet exist and because their families did not have the financial resources required to enrol them in a private school. Some of them had completed their secondary education in English; others had left school. But they had not continued their education beyond the secondary level.

This lack of education clearly has an impact on the type of employment they obtain. They have mostly had poorly paying full-time or part-time jobs in which French was of little or no importance. Julie says: "Now, my English is better than my French; but I only have grade 8 in French for writing." They retain, however, a feeling of belonging to the Francophone community and maintain important social ties of solidarity and support with other Francophones (relatives and friends).

These ties and feelings explain in part the fact that they nevertheless make the effort – despite all the importance they attach to English – to pass French on to their children. In addition, they subscribe to the new value that the middle class assigns to bilingualism.

Very often their efforts yield good results, at least for the first child who, alone in the house, communicates with the mother in French. Sometimes the child even goes to French school. The situation is precarious, however. For example, if the child meets with any difficulties, academic or otherwise, it will be decided, on the advice of experts or of the husband, to change schools and thus renounce bilingual education for the child, the fact of studying two languages being interpreted as the source of its problems. In practical terms, this means that the child will abandon French. The wife has neither the linguistic security nor the authority in the home that would enable her to oppose such a change. The same is true of the choice of language of instruction at the secondary level, if the husband, believing that English is the key that provides access to the labour market, decides that the time has come to have his children educated in English. Often the wife, too, will be of the same opinion, since it corroborates her own experience. In other words, most of these women do wish to pass French on to their children, but they have neither the resources nor the conditions that would enable them to achieve this objective. It must above all be borne in mind that their life experience has also convinced them that English is the key to success.

Let us now look at the opposite example, the case of women who are at the other end of the continuum. Most often these are women living in Ottawa, an environment where conditions tend to be more favourable to the preservation of French than in Sudbury. These women grew up in a majority Francophone environment. They had access to education provided entirely in French, either because they were young enough to benefit from government-funded French schools or because their parents had the means to enrol them in a private school. Belonging to the Francophone middle class, they all pursued their post-secondary education in French. They have jobs where French plays an important, if not essential, role. In addition, often their husband recognizes the value of French, since he too must be bilingual to fill his job.

Unlike the women in the first group, who do not often speak French, they claim the right to use their mother tongue everywhere – at the supermarket, at work and at home. They feel very competent in French and very Francophone. They have full authority with regard to passing French on to their children, and no one questions their competence. Louise, for example, says: "We always agreed that I have full responsibility. You know, I mean [that] the mother is almost entirely responsible for the children. You know, he gave me full authority." Aline, for her part, says: "I told him, 'education is my concern...(laughter). No, but... (laughter) the horses are yours. Education is my area. Don't touch it.'" Finally, Thérèse says: "In the 20 years they are under my authority, I will do everything to ensure that they get all the French they can absorb."

In such circumstances the wife has all the freedom required to assume her role as the parent responsible for passing French on to the children. The children of women in this group all attend a French-language school, if not university. Their mothers consider them fully bilingual and even, in one or two cases, to be Francophones. Their husbands also identify with bilingualism or the Francophone community, or at least ally themselves with it.

These two groups of women show us that exogamy is not necessarily equivalent to assimilation. It is necessary, above all, to look at the conditions in which these mixed families live and consider the French-language institutions and networks to which they do or do not have access. It must also be acknowledged, however, that the children resulting from such marriages are probably not Francophones in the way their mothers were.

Conclusion

For a mixed marriage to be locus of reproduction of the Francophone community the members of the family clearly must have certain forms of economic, politic and social support. French must be, for at least one of the parents if not both, an important economic and social resource. It must represent a form of empowerment and potentiality in their own life. In addition, the family must have access to other Francophone institutions and particularly to the opportunity, for the parents, to attend training courses in French and, for the children, to enrol in French-language schools. Finally, the parents must be able to reach a consensus regarding the ethnolinguistic socialization of their children; the power relationships between the spouses must be relatively balanced.

The children who are born of such marriages, however, do not experience the same reality as their parents. They experience a different, bilingual, reality since as they themselves belong to at least two worlds. They are at the linguistic frontier and thereby they help to define the very reality of the Francophone and the Anglophone in Canada.

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NOTE

1. This survey was funded by the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada.
2. The names have been changed to preserve the anonymity of the persons interviewed and the confidential nature of their testimony.

Shedding light on exogamous families

I was asked to take part in this first national colloquium on exogamous marriages, organized by the *Fédération des communautés francophones et acadienne du Canada (FCFAC)* and the *Office of the Commissioner of Official Languages*, because I facilitated a workshop on the subject at the *Rond Point of the Association canadienne-française de l'Alberta* in the fall of 1993. In a province like Alberta exogamy is a phenomenon of the utmost importance. Based on Statistics Canada documents, the *Commission nationale des parents francophones* has stated that, between 1986 and 1991, the percentage of eligible pupils coming from mixed families rose from 68 to 70% for the 5-to-17 year-old age group, and from 74 to 78% for that from 0-to-4 years (see *Notes... 1994* in the bibliography). It is hardly surprising, therefore, that consideration should be given to this question.

Unfortunately, the 1993 workshop, which resulted in my receiving this invitation, provided us with little specific information because the vast majority of the participants were there only to learn how they were affected by this phenomenon. Only one person whose mother tongue was English attended. I will therefore make reference instead, during this talk, to another study, conducted by a colleague from Alberta, Yvon Laberge (see Laberge 1994 in the bibliography). The final text of this study will soon be available from the *Fédération des parents francophones de l'Alberta* (Room 205, 8925 82nd Avenue, Edmonton, Alberta T6C 0Z2). Before going on, I wish to note, however, that the only Anglophone participant in the Edmonton workshop insisted that she felt it was vital to pass on her own cultural heritage to her children, even if they were enrolled in a French-language school.

In view of the scope of the phenomenon and the paucity of data on the subject, I will take the liberty of mentioning some facts drawn from my personal experience that will help you to interpret my comments properly. I am a Francophone whose father was Anglophone. Since my parents did not speak French at home, I owe my assimilation to the Francophone community mainly to educational institutions. In addition, I married an Anglophone and if my children have French as their mother tongue it is mainly because, when my eldest son was two years old, our family began a two-year stay in Quebec. We returned to Edmonton 12 years ago, and it has been increasingly difficult, since our return, to keep French as the predominant language at home.

I should also mention my participation in the provincial workshop organized by the *Service fransaskois d'éducation des adultes* in Regina in June 1991, with which my colleague Marguerite LeBlanc-Lamarre deals at greater length in her presentation today. This workshop, which brought together some 20 linguistically mixed couples, made clear the richness and complexity of the human realities underlying this phenomenon. The Anglophone spouses who agreed to devote a weekend to it demonstrated, by the sheer fact of their participation, that they were among the couples most committed to the preservation of the Francophone community.

If you feel that my observations on exogamy, which is so disparaged in nationalist circles, are too optimistic, you may be sure that this optimism is due, in part, to the Regina experience.

On the other hand, in the study by Yvon Laberge the intent was to reach families more representative of mixed families in general who had also agreed to enrol their children in a French-language school. Sponsored by the Fédération des parents francophones de l'Alberta, this study provides a summary of the information obtained in 1993 from semi-guided interviews conducted with 14 couples and one spouse. The 12 principals of French-language schools in the province were also questioned as part of this study. The experience of these bilingual families with regard to the French-language school is the main point of interest of these interviews, and the subject will no doubt also be of interest to you, who are as concerned as are people in educational circles to know what circumstances are best for transmitting the French culture in the various regions of Canada. However, I was more concerned with the general conditions in which these mixed couples live, rather than with their particular aspirations regarding the schools their children attend. It seemed to me that the FCFAC would like to look at the issue of mixed couples from a broader perspective, going well beyond their attitudes towards their children's schools.

Before dealing with the substance of the information obtained it would probably be useful to provide some basic information about the couples interviewed. They were selected from among persons of the normal age for parents (37, on average), came in equal numbers from the city and the country and, with the exception of three parents, their mother tongue was French or English. It is probably significant that 58% of these parents worked in a profession requiring university training and their average annual income of \$70,000 was well above the Canadian average.

In addition, probably because their children were enrolled in a French-language school, all the Francophone husbands and wives spoke French with their children, although English greatly predominated in the homes of all the parents interviewed. This is probably related to a second factor: the fact that the Francophones tend to regard their English-speaking spouse as being very open-minded – with respect not only to French culture itself but also to any human reality that differs from theirs. What characterizes these Anglophone (or Allophone) spouses is their concern to ensure that their children become bilingual, while the Francophone spouse assumes responsibility for transmitting the French culture and heritage proper. Thus, these couples simultaneously show concern for cultural reproduction on the one hand and an openness and tolerance to this culture on the other. There accordingly seems to be good agreement on promoting language transmission insofar as possible. In view of the omnipresence of English in the environment, the parents expressed no concern about their children's competence in that language. On the contrary, they quite often emphasized that they had had the pleasant surprise of hearing their children – no doubt because of the school – spontaneously speak French at home.

Such satisfaction with the school is related to the fact that the children seem relatively happy there. In general, parents insist that quality instruction is the first priority and that if this were ever compromised they would have no hesitation in withdrawing their children from the school, even if doing so might have an adverse impact on their cultural integration into the Francophone community. The issue remains largely theoretical, however, since most parents expressed only satisfaction with the school. In another connection it should be noted that most of the parents from urban areas said they were concerned about the system of values underlying the school. The FCFAC will no doubt wish to enquire into the values underlying all Francophone institutions. Of the seven urban couples who took part in the study, four wondered about the Catholicism in the schools – less about Catholicism as such than about a rather fundamentalist form of Catholicism, rigidly traditional and regarded as intolerant and insular. These parents pointed out a danger that faces any minority group – that of becoming ghettoized, of stubbornly clinging to a position based on an easily identifiable past and too quickly rejecting modernity. Francophone and Anglophone parents expressed some concern about the arrogance that Franco-Albertan and Quebec circles seem to show regarding family values; they deal with these values quite openly, taking into account the world in all its complexity.

And yet these couples are in no way revolutionary in terms of the division of domestic tasks. Leaving aside the issue of language, it is mainly the mother who looks after the children's education. The effort this may represent for the non-Francophone parent may be noted, in passing. One parent said in this regard that when he sat down at the work table with his child, he had a French-English dictionary on one side and the telephone on the other – to be able to call upon the assistance of a teacher or Francophone neighbour, if necessary. Some parents, who have a good but limited knowledge of French, take the opportunity to learn along with their children; however, they are concerned about how much help they will be able to provide later, when the children have gone beyond them.

Unfortunately, Anglophone or Allophone parents take relatively little part in school activities. While some would like to participate in parents' meetings, they often find themselves prevented from doing so by the mere fact that these are conducted entirely in French: "The fact that everything is in French is a turn-off." A number of parents said that they liked the classroom work and would agree to participate in it, avoiding any direct interaction with the children to safeguard the Francophone nature of the school. By doing so they could provide more active assistance in an English class, for example, but the school relegated them to purely physical activities: preparing notice boards, photocopying or work in the kitchen. The school principals, for their part, confirmed that such parents are assigned only a limited role and one of them even said that he would not encourage their participation. It is no doubt a cause for regret that no principal has developed a special program to encourage and recognize the contribution that such parents can make, especially in view of the fact that many of these principals have acknowledged the high price such parents pay to

keep their children in a French-language school. Note should be taken, however, of the efforts that two schools in the province have made to promote the participation of such parents in meetings by taking the time to provide regular summaries for them in English of the discussions as the meeting progresses. In some schools considerable efforts are made to make them feel truly welcome, but attitudes vary a great deal in this regard; in some cases, an almost entirely bilingual Christmas concert will be organized, while in others any activity in English will be categorically rejected, except for personal contacts between the parent and teacher or principal.

To explore this issue of the Anglophone parent in relation to the Francophone community more fully, we must also discuss the real opposition such persons encounter when they decide to enrol their children in a French-language school. Such opposition comes from relatives as well as friends. The parents' explanations do not always suffice and the result is quite often a significant reduction in their contacts with some members of their own family. We should not underestimate the penalties our spouses have to pay to ensure the cultural continuance of the Francophone community. They face sometimes strong – even scornful – opposition from the Francophone community: "I try to speak French. I find it negative having someone come down on me because I muck up the language." This resistance by the Francophone community is confirmed by interviews conducted with school principals. According to them, convinced Francophone parents, who have fought hard for the establishment of the school, see the presence of children from mixed families as an impoverishment or even a possible contamination of the French language and culture. This kind of rejection is not to be found, however, among the principals themselves, who feel that the number of such children is not large enough to change the climate of the school; on the contrary, they are very much aware of the advantages for all of an increase in their clientele.

By way of conclusion, I would like to mention some very specific traits that characterize these mixed couples, traits that are equally evident from the information gathered in Regina and Edmonton, at the 1993 Rond Point and in interviews conducted in connection with Yvon Laberge's study, to which I have already sufficiently referred. These traits also emerge from the results of the study on bicultural couples conducted in the Ottawa-Hull region by Christine Marcoux (see Marcoux 1993 in the bibliography).

There is, first of all, a high value placed on bilingualism, and although this might be expected it is probably useful to mention it here. The major points that clearly emerge from the results of Yvon Laberge's study, however, are the importance assigned to openness towards other cultures and the fear of some degree of intolerance on the part of nationalists. Hence there is reason to anticipate that, at least in the cities, tensions will develop between endogamous families (especially those closely associated with nationalist associations) and mixed couples. Francophones will therefore have to show considerable respect and openness when they engage in activities designed to ensure cultural continuance. It seems important to me, in this context, that Francophones define very carefully the demands they will make on the community to preserve the characteristics of their institutions. Each situation gives rise to difficult discussions, and it is well to recall here that Anglophone spouses are very proud of their open-mindedness. It will be necessary to rely upon this good will to bring them to understand the requirements of each particular situation. In addition, the sacrifices that they will be invited to make will have to be justified as part and parcel of a project that is open to all human possibilities, not only the values of the past.

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The project "Our Cultural Reality"

Good afternoon,

I wish, first of all, to thank Sylvio Morin of the Fédération des communautés francophones et acadienne du Canada, and the Office of the Commissioner of Official Languages, who invited me to come to speak to you about Saskatchewan's experience with regard to exogamy.

I quickly accepted Mr. Morin's invitation because I regard exogamy as a decisive factor for the future of the Francophone communities outside Quebec. Thanks to the researchers who are studying exogamy and its consequences, we are now in a better position to understand the full magnitude of the phenomenon.

Introduction

This afternoon I would like to speak to you about three points. First, I will briefly remind you of a few important statistics. Then, I will present a summary of our project "Our Cultural Reality". Finally, I will report a number of conclusions and give a summary of the results and impact to date of the project.

Statistics

Since I am more a practitioner than a researcher, I will restrict myself to citing only a few statistics. In 1986, according to Messrs. Lachapelle and Dallaire, 55% of couples living in Saskatchewan constituted exogamous families. According to projections, by the year 2000 more than 80% of Fransaskois will marry a partner of the other culture. This trend was already evident in 1986, when Raymond Mongeon found that 59% of Francophones between the ages of 15 and 24 had made an exogamous marriage; the figure was 23% for Francophones 65 and older.

As a Fransaskois concerned about the vitality of French-Canadians, I find it inconceivable not to intervene with respect to exogamous couples. And, in my opinion, "Our Cultural Reality" and other projects of its kind are just as important today.

"Our Cultural Reality"

This project was implemented in Saskatchewan from 1990 to 1992 by the Service francsaskois d'éducation des adultes (SFEA), a department of the Corporation du Collège Mathieu.

Consisting of three phases, the project was the first of its kind to be developed in Canada. I should also add here that Frank McMahon, the author of today's paper, "Shedding Light on Exogamous Families", contributed to the success of the provincial colloquium held in June 1991, in which he participated as a special guest. His contributions enriched the experience of the exogamous partners, of the organizing team to which we belonged and of the Fransaskois population in general.

Origins of the project

In 1989 a colleague from the SFEA and I were travelling on business. We had occasion to speak, several times, about the phenomenon of assimilation and, in particular, about what else we might do, as adult education specialists, to combat it. After several discussions on the subject, in the air and on the ground, we decided to form an advisory committee to provide us with guidance in the matter.

A few months later this committee met with an outside facilitator, Gérald DesRosiers, who might help us to act more objectively when the time came – if indeed the committee so decided – to work on preparing the project.

At this point I would like to tell you a little story. At the second meeting of the committee, after going around the table several times so that all could contribute, Michèle Vallières, a Francophone from the small village of Assiniboia in southern Saskatchewan, suddenly spoke up:

Can something be done for Francophones in mixed marriages? There is never anything for us. Either you join the Anglophone "mainstream" or you try to be "good Francophones" – even if the so-called "real Francophones" think that we are less Francophone than they are. They treat us like black sheep, the black sheep of the Francophone community. We have no place of our own, either with Francophones or with Anglophones.

The committee's initial reaction was one of surprise: first, because Ms Vallières spoke in a strong, loud voice and second, because, judging by the faces the committee members made, her comments raised several questions: "Is it possible? Excellent idea, very brave, but how, in English? That's playing with fire....etc."

When all had asked their questions and expressed their fears, the committee came to the conclusion that the idea of raising the awareness of mixed couples was an excellent one, but that exogamy was an explosive subject. And then the questions were asked: who was going to pay for the damage if things went badly, who would take on the project – the SFEA? – and could such an initiative could really be characterized as an adult education project?

Without hard figures, the committee wanted to explore the specific topic of assimilation in the context of exogamy further. It found to be essential, first of all, to define a way of tackling the issue. At its third meeting the committee discovered that the statistics backed up its conclusions, that the rate of exogamous marriages among Francophones had risen sharply in recent decades and that the percentage of exogamous marriages was increasing continually. It should also be noted that in 91% of exogamous families English is the only language used at home. The same statistics show that a similar percentage of these exogamous families do not send their children to French-language schools.

The spirit of the project

I will stop here for a moment to tell you about the approach that guided the people involved in the project. It was an open approach, one that called for consciousness-raising and accountability, where the participants were regarded as actors free to choose their own destinies. There was no attempt at conversion or to instil guilt, no pressure. The Actes du colloque set it out as a principle that "complete respect for the choices of those participating is the basis for the approach at all times."

It was a hard pill to swallow. As militant Francophones, we had to ask ourselves whether we were really prepared to adopt this approach. We were well aware that if we did not adopt it totally the project would fail and no one would win. We had to put aside all our prejudices, all our perceptions, all our analyses, to go forward in partnership which is what people wanted.

Armed with these considerations and statistics and with the help of consultants, the committee developed "Our Cultural Reality/Nos réalités linguistiques". Its objectives, briefly, were as follows:

The partners will further understanding of their linguistic and cultural experiences, will clarify their power with respect to this experience and to the possibilities the future holds and to a decision as to whether or not to exercise this power. This involves studying the past so as achieve a better understanding of the current situation, defining the future and the control we have over our own situation and acting so as to reach the desired goal.

The partners, therefore, would advance in their understanding of their linguistic and cultural experience, in the clarification of their power with respect to this experience and to the future and, in short, in the decision whether or not to act.

If the project was to succeed, all those involved had to feel free to express themselves, with the result that the same themes were dealt with simultaneously in French and in English in the various rooms and there were frequent joint sessions.

Since the objectives were too numerous to be dealt with in a single weekend colloquium, we divided the project into three phases; a pre-colloquium, a provincial colloquium and a post-colloquium.

The pre-colloquium

The pre-colloquium made it possible to give the project a certain visibility in the communities, what I called "publicity for doubting Thomases". People could, so to speak, "touch" the project, before really becoming involved in the process. At first all sorts of comments were heard. "These fanatics are coming to brainwash us! They are trying to tell us what to do. What do they know about it? They don't understand our experience. Fanatics who are able to listen? That would be a surprise! They are all narrow-minded. Forget it. I don't even want to talk to them. That would just give them more ammunition for later on!" And so forth.

At the start, we knew that people would be paranoid – both Francophones and Anglophones, and both exogamous Francophones and other Francophones. For many, the idea in itself was not a bad one, but they wondered if it was really possible not to avoid creating losers by implementing it. If there is one thing to remember among the lessons we learned from the experience, it is that **no one wants to lose**. After all, who among you here present would want to be put in a no-win situation? It was vital to create a situation or a project where everyone might consider themselves winners.

The provincial colloquium

The provincial colloquium was the chief forum for consciousness-raising. At this colloquium people explored issues thoroughly. The emotion was very evident and the atmosphere was charged at times. The participants gave a great deal, but they also gained something.

After the colloquium, everyone who had participated felt ready to act. Some however, felt completely unprepared and recognized that there were a number of decisions to be taken.

The post-colloquium

Those who participated in the post-colloquium were able to make use of a supporting document, the Actes du colloque, which gave them an opportunity to relive, as it were, the experience as a whole.

Many of the partners who had participated in the provincial colloquium played the role of facilitator at the post-colloquium, either at the sessions themselves or in mini-workshops similar to those at the provincial colloquium. Many of them emphasized that the couples they knew would really benefit from the project and that if they spoke to them about it they would probably be ready to invest some thinking time in it.

By the time I left the SFEA, over 200 people had participated in the project. This may seem like a small number, but, in Saskatchewan it is quite remarkable for a community development project like this.

Some general conclusions and a summary of the project's results and impact to date

Some overall conclusions

Three overall conclusions could clearly be drawn by the end of the project.

The first has to do with the language of communication in the home. If a Fransaskois does not have a good command of his or her mother tongue and the Anglophone does not know French – as is often the case – the result is obvious: the children will find it difficult to acquire French as their mother tongue.

The second conclusion concerns the arrival of the couple's first child. This often has the effect of upsetting everything. It is then that the real questions are asked, rarely before. One participant described the phenomenon: "If my husband did not know that the Francophone in him would rise up when our first child was born, how was I to know? And what do we do now?"

The third conclusion has to do with the real potential of the exogamous family, which can be a source of enrichment for both the children and the parents.

A summary of the project's results and impact to date

In response to requests from people who took part in the project, the SFEA has developed workshops on French as a second language designed especially for Anglophones in exogamous families who want to learn French. These workshops, which are based on everyday family situations – the baby's bath, for example – are now an integral part of the SFEA's program. The SFEA also continues to be involved in the issue of Francophone literacy.

The SFEA developed a workshop to enable people who were planning an exogamous marriage to familiarize themselves with the various aspects of such a marriage. Funds ran short, however, so this project could not be completed.

A number of Fransaskois associations, on their own initiative, decided to continue to work on the issue. For two years now, the Association culturelle franco-canadienne de la Saskatchewan has, at its annual meeting, offered workshops for exogamous couples.

The parents' committees of Fransaskois schools are beginning to approach their exogamous members, as well as with all their other members, concerning the integration of exogamous families into the life of the schools, with due regard for their role and language of communication.

The Association coopérative du préscolaire fransaskois has made the Actes du colloque part of its welcome kit for newborns and has also met with a number of exogamous couples who have pre-school children.

The Associations des directeurs et directrices des écoles françaises wishes to become directly involved in the issue.

The Commission culturelle fransaskoise organized a congress last weekend where exogamy was one of the topics for discussion.

Canadian Parents for French (CPF) was informed of the project and expressed great interest in co-operating. Once again, however, lack of funds frustrated the realization of this plan. If it succeeds in taking on this project, CPF would be able to link up with a large number of participants.

And, this weekend, we are discussing the topic of exogamy at the national level.

Many exogamous couples are beginning to become aware of the fact that they have a place in French-Canadian culture. Many also wish to identify, along with their children, with this culture and as a result they seek to understand what is going to become of this identification, what they themselves can do to integrate into this culture and what organizations will do to promote such integration.

Conclusion

I will conclude quickly by saying how pleased I am that you, the leaders, recognize the vital importance of intercultural relations. We all know the statistics and we know what the consequences might be if the issue is not explored further. We also know the opportunities that lie before us, if we are very vigilant regarding the issue and take the necessary action.

We have the power to act based on the needs of a large segment of our population and to create a situation in which everyone will end up winning. We need to clarify the power we have and then decide whether or not to exercise it.

We have before us some examples of tangible projects that can not only inspire us but can also, prompt us to develop simple and achievable action plans.

Thank you!

In detail, the objectives were:

- 1. To identify the principal elements that have characterized change in the family or individual linguistic/cultural reality.**
- 2. To identify difficult situations experienced due to the exogamous nature of the family.**
- 3. To list the assets that we have that help us to deal with these difficult situations and reduce their scope and impact (discover and appreciate the potential of our reality).**
- 4. To recognize the power or control that we have over the factors contributing to the advent of difficult situations.**
- 5. To recognize the power or control that we have to deal with these difficult situations.**
- 6. To decide individually and as a couple to take action.**
- 7. To choose concrete actions.**
- 8. To identify educational and any other needs in relation to the actions decided on.**
- 9. To identify, from among existing resources, those which will prove useful in satisfying needs.**

Reception structures for Francophone immigrants

During the mini-colloquium on exogamy Ms. Jabli spoke to us about her own experience when she settled in Canada. She told us about the difficulty immigrants have in settling in a new country and adapting to a new culture.

The values and traditions of the newcomers are, in many cases, different from those of the Canadian population. Their views on life in Canada also differ from ours – for example, in relation to the weather and our winters. For those of us who have lived in this country since our birth, what could be more natural than to protect ourselves against the cold with a hat or tuque? For someone who has never seen a snowflake, quick adaptation to a more rigorous climate is vital.

Lack of information about the Canadian way of life is thus a barrier to the integration of new citizens.

In addition, non-recognition of foreign qualifications obliges immigrants either to re-train or to take second-rate jobs. As a result, many have the distinct impression that they are not contributing their share to the economic and social development of Canada to the extent to which they are capable. In coming to settle in this country the desire of most immigrants is to be full citizens on the same basis as all other Canadians.

For this reason, according to Ms. Jabli, it is important to review our reception system so as to provide, among other things, better training and better information to newcomers.

CONCLUSIONS

At the end of this day rich in food for thought about exogamy and what it entails, it was clear that the links between assimilation and exogamy, as currently experienced by bicultural families, are close. The challenge, we were told, is a considerable one. Let us ask ourselves: How can the exogamous family succeed in passing on French as a mother tongue from one generation to the next and ensure the transmission of French culture so as to contribute to the vitality of the Francophone and Acadian communities? The family cannot assume this responsibility alone; there must be institutional co-operation. The Francophone parent cannot cope alone; there must be a sharing of responsibilities. Francophone organizations will not succeed on their own; there must be co-operation by all concerned.

Considerations

Accordingly, based on sociologist Roger Bernard's opening paper and following the presentations of the speakers invited to share their knowledge in this field, the participants suggested a large number of specific actions based on the following considerations:

- exogamy is a growing social phenomenon in the minority communities;
- increasing numbers of Anglophone parents living in a situation of exogamy and other Anglophone groups are taking an interest in the French language and culture;
- methods are being sought to reduce or even eliminate certain negative effects of exogamy on the learning of French as the home language;
- there is an interdependent relationship between the individual, the family, the school and the community.

Participants' recommendations

Individual action

1. Francophones should be invited to develop Francophone pride and a strong Francophone identity.

Family action

2. Couples and their children should be invited to commit themselves to their French identity, to negotiate and proclaim it within the extended family and their environment.
3. Provision should be made for various types of training to assist newlyweds (e.g., preparation for exogamous parenting).

Action by schools

4. A system of Francophone daycare centres able to provide Francophone pre-school instruction should be created.
5. Francization courses should be prepared and made available.
6. Measures should be taken to improve cultural products in French for students, products that reflect their lives, interests and needs (music, videos, radio programs, school programs, school-related activities).
7. The increased involvement of parents with schools and that of students in community activities should be facilitated.
8. Teachers should receive the training required to better understand the minority environment.

Collective community action

9. **The legitimacy of preserving the French language and culture should be affirmed through word and deed and the conviction spread that it is possible to do so:**
 - i) **by developing Francophone social institutions in sufficient numbers and of high quality (daycare centres, schools, radio and television stations, cultural centres);**
 - ii) **by conducting a consciousness-raising campaign among parents and community and society leaders (by creating programs such as immersion schools; preparing a folder co-funded by OCOL and the Department of Canadian Heritage presenting the situation, the statistics and courses of action to take to reduce the negative perceptions of exogamy);**
 - iii) **by developing alliances with other groups such as those representing the 300,000 immersion students, Francophone immigrants and spouses and other Anglophones);**
 - iv) **by publicizing and sharing the experiences and successes of exogamous couples which reflect the diverse and distinct identities of Canada (brochures, folders on specific subjects, etc.).**

Implementation

10. **As a follow-up to this colloquium we invite the representative provincial organizations to identify and orchestrate the actions to be taken in co-operation with appropriate partners.**

It may be noted that the participants have been careful to draw attention to the positive aspects of linguistic duality that can be observed in bicultural families.

A framework for action has been proposed; it is time to implement it. This is an invitation to all those interested in making progress in this area.